

ROTUNDA

the magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum

**BURYING
THE NOBLE
SAVAGE**

**WHAT WERE
THE FIRST
ANIMALS
ON LAND?**

**THE ART
IN INUIT
SCULPTURE**

**BATS,
BATS,
BATS**



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ROTUNDA

the magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum

Volume 25, Number 2, Fall 1992

Date of Issue: August 1992

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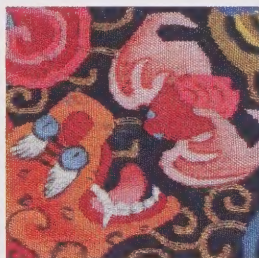
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A cover from *Campfire Girls* magazine, 1916.

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Published quarterly by the Royal Ontario Museum

© The Royal Ontario Museum, 1992 Printed and bound in Canada

Indexed in the *Canadian Periodical Index*

Indexed in the *Canadian Magazine Index* and available on-line

in the *Canadian Business & Current Affairs Database*

ISSN 0035-8495

Second class mail registration number 1531

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SINGLE COPY SALES

Subscriptions \$16.95 (4 issues) plus 7% GST,

outside Canada add \$4.00 for postage and handling; single copies \$4.25 plus 7% GST

All circulation and subscription inquiries should be addressed to *Rotunda*,

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Rotunda, the magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum,

100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6,

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✿ EDITOR'S NOTE ✿

"FOR THE LONGEST TIME I didn't know what to say when someone asked if I was 'really Indian.'"

These are the words of Deborah Doxtator of the Woodland Cultural Centre, and it is easy to understand her dilemma. After all this could be an especially tough question to answer if you are Indian and you suspect that the person posing the question has in mind an image like the one on the cover of this issue of *Rotunda*. Doxtator is the curator of *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness*, which will open at the Royal Ontario Museum on 7 November. Her satirical, often comic, and always insightful exhibition and its accompanying book inspired Robert Fulford, in the cover story, to look at the issue of cultural stereotyping as it applies to whites and Indians.

While Doxtator is distressed by people who ask if she is really an Indian, George Swinton is equally dismayed by those who question the genuine artistic merits of Inuit sculpture. One of the issues that Fulford raises in his article is the concept of cultural purity, the non-native belief that North American and other aboriginal cultures were pure until touched by European cultures at which point the integrity of the native cultures was ruined. George Swinton raises this and other matters in his article about the history of Inuit sculpture. Swinton explains the differing views on Inuit sculpture, including Inuit motives for creating it, and non-Inuit motives for classifying it as an anthropological curiosity, or as great art, or as "impure" and unworthy of consideration. Evident throughout is his own deep appreciation of an art form that he knows intimately and has collected for decades.

While Fulford and Swinton pon-



der how different human cultures analyse and classify one another, biologist Brock Fenton has broadened his endless research on bats to include an exploration of how humans classify bats in non-scientific ways. Whereas the

Chinese put images of bats on everything from textiles to tea cups to symbolize good fortune, other cultures have maligned the poor animals in many ways, including the use of such derisive expressions as "blind as a bat." Fenton is not an anthropologist and does not attempt to explain varying cultural attitudes towards bats. As a biologist, however, he identifies the bats described, and in his article he shares some of the fascinating facts and fiction about these often-misunderstood animals.

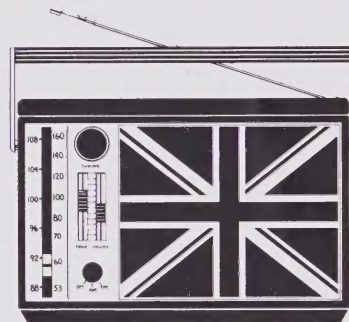
Misconceptions also abound about prehistoric life, and, not surprisingly, they too are based on gaps in human knowledge. That is why a site such as strip-mine Pit 11 of Mazon Creek, in northeastern Illinois, is so valuable. As palaeontologist Des Collins points out in his latest article, the clarity of the fossil record found in Pit 11 is helping scientists piece together a picture of ancient life in the Carboniferous Period, 300 million years ago. Collins also explains how the site is offering more clues to the origins of land-based plants and animals.

As Fulford states in his article, "most human wisdom begins with the creation of categories (a nicer word for stereotypes)." But when this process is based on fantasy rather than on fact, the results can be assumptions as foolish as the blindness of bats or as destructive as one human culture writing off another.

Sandra Shaul

SANDRA SHAUL

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Aéroplan



Niagara, Brink of Horseshoe Falls, 1872 oil on canvas, by Hermann Herzog.
*Purchased by the Royal Ontario Museum with the assistance
of a grant from the Government of Canada under the terms
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Canadiana Department Acquires an Unusual View of Niagara

A handsome oil painting *Niagara, Brink of Horseshoe Falls* (1872) by Hermann Herzog was recently purchased by the Canadiana Department with the generous assistance of the Government of Canada under the terms of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act. It is an unusual view of the site because it focuses on the buildings on the Canadian shore, rather than on the famous waterfall itself. This is tourist Niagara, with visitors in the foreground, and a row of museums, souvenir shops, and hotels along the embankment from Table Rock to

the suspension bridge. The buildings are bathed in the pink glow of sunset—a luminist approach that gives a soft romantic aura to the town, which was actually bristling with commercial enterprises.

Table Rock, with its curved cupola, is shown in the foreground. It was built by Saul Davis in 1854, in competition with Thomas Barnett's much earlier museum. Between 1857 and 1860 Barnett had a new stone building constructed, at such expense that he never recovered financially. In 1877 the property passed into the hands of his rival. In the background, under a rainbow, next to the Niagara Suspension Bridge stands the Clifton House ho-

tel (built in 1833 and destroyed by fire in 1898).

The artist, Hermann Herzog, was born in Bremen, Germany, and trained at the Dusseldorf Academy. He emigrated to North America in the mid-1860s, and painted landscapes of Florida, of the American West, and of European subjects. Herzog visited Niagara Falls in 1872 and 1878 and painted a number of views of this dramatic site. He settled in Philadelphia in the 1870s, and continued painting until at least 1906.

MARY ALLODI
*Mary Allodi is curator in the
Canadiana Department,
Royal Ontario Museum*

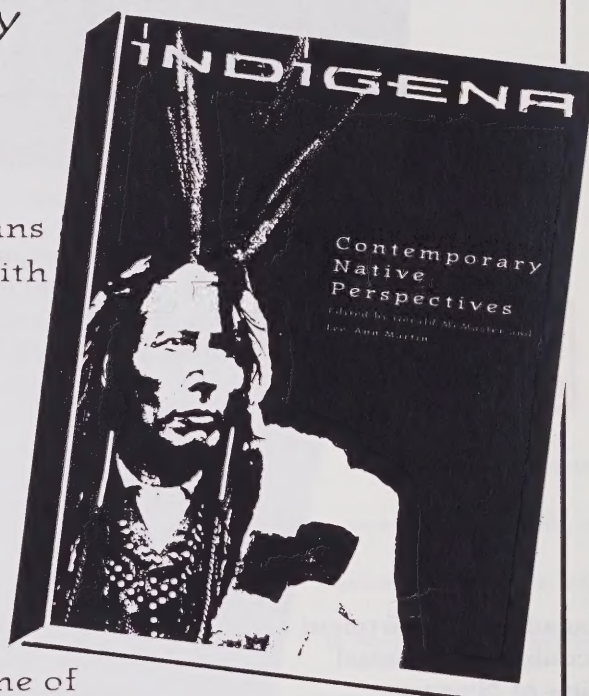


INDIGENA

Contemporary
Native
Perspectives

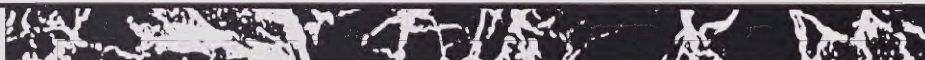
In *INDIGENA*, Native Canadians address historical injustice with passion and clarity, while offering hope for the future.

Eight writers and nineteen visual artists respond to the five hundredth anniversary of Columbus's landfall to the Americas, offering sharp counterpoint to the overused and inaccurate theme of "discovery," and celebrating both diversity and cultural tenacity.



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Luwak coffee from Indonesia is highly appreciated by connoisseurs of the brew.

Luwak Coffee

THERE IS AN INDONESIAN BREW THAT lends a whole new meaning to the expression "drop in for a cup of coffee." It is called *kopi luwak*, a premium java processed from the droppings of civet cats and available at gourmet prices throughout the Indonesian archipelago.

We first heard about it during a visit to the Golden Triangle of northwestern Thailand. One evening, as we sat drinking the house brew and listening to the stories of our innkeeper, who had been born in Indonesia, a slinky raccoon-like creature slid down from the roof and sauntered across the picnic table, stopping to sip 7-Up from our host's hat.

"This is the family pet," he said, rubbing the civet's ears as he drank. "You will not believe what he can do." Then he launched into a story

that cured some of us of our caffeine addiction for good.

The luwak, he explained, is attracted to the coffee estates of Indonesia, the world's fourth-largest coffee-producing nation. Known to zoologists as *Viverra zibetha*, the gentle animal roams the plantations at night, munching only the choicest coffee berries, which, along with other soft fruits, birds' eggs, and insects, make up the bulk of its diet. The luwak eats the whole berry, but cannot digest the beans in the core. Once inside the animal's stomach, the beans undergo a natural curing or fermentation process before they are excreted in tidy little piles.

Soon after the colonial Dutch introduced coffee growing to Indonesia in the seventeenth century, plantation workers began to notice the small mounds of "processed" coffee

beans scattered throughout the plantations. They gathered the beans, cleaned them off, and discovered that they made a coffee of superior quality.

Despite the earnestness of our innkeeper's story, it seemed far-fetched. Nevertheless, several weeks later we dropped by the National Library in Singapore and asked to see their collection of rare books. There, to our amazement, we came upon an 1824 account of luwak coffee in Thomas Horsfield's *Zoological Researches in Java and the Neighbouring Islands*. He wrote:

The coffee plantations in Java are greatly infested by the Viverra musanga. In some parts of the island it has on this account obtained the name of coffee rat. It devours the berries in large quantities and its visits are soon discovered by the

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HOLMAN

parcels of seed which it discharges unchanged. It selects only the ripest and most perfect fruits, and the seeds are eagerly collected by the natives, as the coffee is thus obtained without the tedious process of removing its membranaceous arillus [the husks of the coffee berry].

The injurious effects occasioned by the ravages of the luwak in the plantations, are, however, fully counterbalanced by propagating the plant in various parts of the forest, particularly on the declivities of the fertile hills; these spontaneous groves of a valuable fruit in various parts of the western districts of Java afford to the natives no inconsiderable harvest, while the accidental discovery of them surprises and delights the traveller in the most sequestered parts of the island.

The cottage industry that sprang up around kopi luwak survives today. The beans, which fetch up to seven times the price of ordinary coffee, are carefully set aside by plantation workers for collection by buyers such as Tugu Luwak, a company

in the northern coastal city of Semarang, which has been processing luwak coffee for more than 30 years.

Company director Iwan Susanto says it was the superior quality of the coffee, not its odd source, which attracted him in the beginning. Unlike plantation pickers, he says, "This animal can select the coffee when it is at its peak of ripeness. Human coffee pickers just take the red berries. But they don't know if they are the best or the ripest. People can't select perfectly ripe coffee. But the luwak can. The animal only selects the best."

Unlike conventionally collected coffee beans, the luwak beans require little processing after their arrival at the factory. What remains a mystery is the curing of the coffee beans in the animal's stomach. It is this natural fermentation, according to Susanto, which distinguishes luwak coffee from all others. No one knows what it is about the luwak's digestive process that gives the coffee its special flavour. But Tugu Luwak, in collaboration with

the nearby Djarum cigarette company, is conducting experiments to solve the mystery.

In Djarum's laboratory, scientists are attempting to develop a synthetic process that duplicates the natural curing and fermentation, which takes place in the luwak's stomach. If successful, the experiments could help increase the amount of luwak coffee made.

At present the major factor limiting an increase in luwak coffee in the marketplace is the small quantity produced. According to Susanto, thirty years ago luwak coffee was easy to find. Production at Tugu Luwak used to be 1000 to 2000 kilos per day. In 1991, the company was able to buy only about 20 tonnes of pure luwak coffee, which amounts to less than a single day's production at the Semarang plant.

One of the reasons for the decline in luwak coffee beans is hunting. Luwaks are often killed by plantation workers for food; it is the one animal more prized than chicken. True to the saying "You are what you eat," the flavour of luwak is en-

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hanced by its diet of coffee, pineapple, and other plantation crops. Another factor is the increased use of guard dogs that keep the nocturnal animals from devouring other valuable crops. Therefore some people perceive the luwak as a cash crop, others consider it a delicacy, and yet others scorn it as vermin.

Pure luwak coffee cannot be made today. Other high-quality coffees are blended with luwak beans to impart the special flavour. Susanto compares the blending of coffees to the method of using mother wines to make sherry. "The amount of luwak coffee we use depends in part on the quality of the coffee we are blending it with. Ninety per cent of the normal coffee we use is of sufficient quality to require only a small percentage of luwak. But if it is of lower quality, we must use more luwak." He says the blend is so close to the flavour of pure luwak coffee that only an expert could tell the difference. The taste of luwak coffee varies according to elevation and the region of Indonesia in which it is grown. It may have a rich, nutty flavour with a pleasant aftertaste, or a smoky flavour. The taste also varies according to the vessel from which the coffee is consumed. China is preferred by most coffee drinkers.

There are only a few producers of luwak coffee in Indonesia, of which Tugu Luwak is the largest. Most of the firm's output is consumed domestically, although it has overseas markets in Taiwan, Korea, Spain, and the Netherlands.

The company would like to increase its production of the coffee and the size of its overseas markets but there is a hurdle: convincing potential customers to overcome their aversion to the idea of consuming a byproduct of animal droppings. Susanto is stumped by the problem. "We don't explain the special nature of this coffee," he says. "Our customers just select it for its high quality."

KIM CARTER AND SCOTT MCCLELLAN
Kim Carter and Scott McClellan
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THE ART IN INUIT SCULPTURE

*Inuit sculpture can inform and
delight beyond the stories it tells*

GEORGE SWINTON

WHEN, IN THE 1920s, FATHER Projct, o.m.i., posed for a double-exposure photograph in Chesterfield Inlet, he could have hardly imagined the eventual significance of the small collection of Inuit carvings he displayed, and the art historical value of the photograph itself. Objects like those pictured had frequently been collected and described by explorers, social and natural scientists, traders, whalers, sailors, government employees, missionaries, and adventurous tourists. Depending on their interests and viewpoints, collectors referred to the objects as curios, miniatures, toys, or artifacts. At best, they were considered *objets d'art*, collectible but not really valuable as art. In fact, they were mostly acquired by barter for tea and tobacco. Father Projct's intriguing presentation of his carvings and himself is, I believe, the first photograph of a proud Canadian Inuit art collector.

The Canadian Handicrafts Guild, formed by the Women's Art Association in Montreal, began to show interest in what was referred to as Eskimo art, when it started "to collect anything that drifted their way," and as early as 1910 it occasionally exhibited "native crafts of Canada including carvings." Later, in 1930, the Guild arranged an exhibition of Eskimo art, collected mainly by Diamond Jenness and Vilhjalmur

Stefansson, at the old McCord Museum, which even attracted the attention of the *New York Times*. The exhibition was composed mostly of artifacts and a large number of "pencil drawings of Eskimo life by one Enooesweetok of Baffinland," all of which were declared crude by the newspaper. Diamond Jenness, in 1922, had similarly described such work in an article entitled "Eskimo Art."

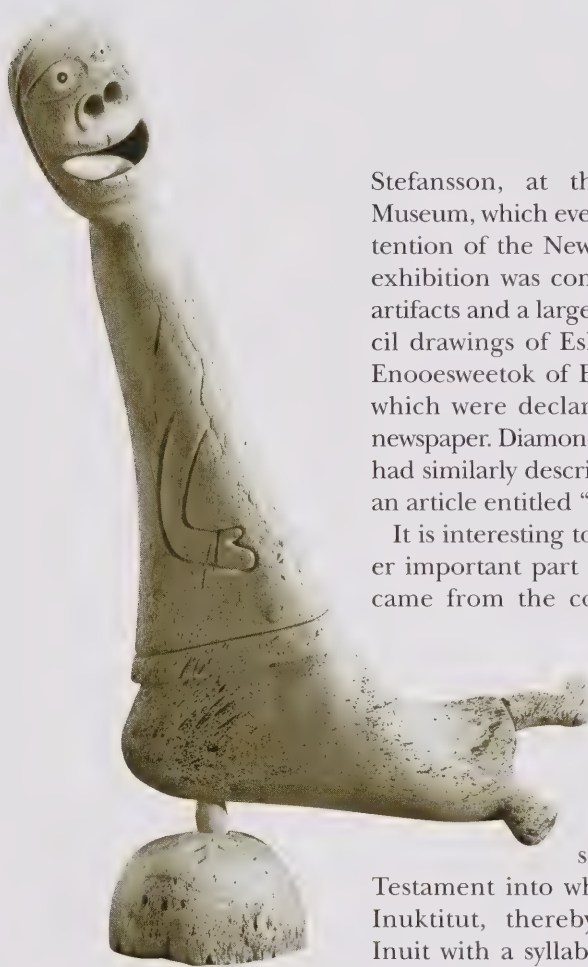
It is interesting to note that another important part of the exhibition came from the collection of Mrs.

James Peck, the widow of the Reverend E. J. Peck. The Reverend Mr. Peck had translated and transcribed the New

Testament into what is now called Inuktitut, thereby providing the Inuit with a syllabic writing system still in use today. The Pecks and, later, Bishop Marsh and his wife Winifred, were deeply involved in the Inuit north and collected hundreds of artifacts.

For the Inuit, the concept of art played only a very minor role in the production and perception of objects. There was no Inuktitut term for art. Yet the artistic side of Inuit sculpture is fascinating to study.

Even in English, the term "art" is of-



Above: Ashevak, Spirit Figure, 1972. Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Facing page: In the 1920s Father Projct, o.m.i., posed for a double-exposure photograph to give the impression of two people engrossed in a discussion of a collection of Inuit carvings (also see page 17). Department of the Interior Collection.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO

George Swinton is a passionate collector and Canada's leading authority on Inuit art

ten quite ambiguous in its meanings, because the word refers to both process and product. As process it broadly means the performance of a skill such as the art of cooking or sewing, with the implication of high quality. For those who perform a skill superbly, the word "master" is applied; for example, master craftsman. Such skilled people may produce masterpieces. The Inuktitut word *sananguaq*, on the other hand, denotes process with no reference to quality: *sana-* means making and *-nguaq* means model, likeness, or imitation with the added implication of small, especially in the Greenland dialects. *Sananguaq*, the word closest to art in its meaning, is translated as a likeness or a replica of an object, activity, or idea, which has been made.

Art as product is practically impossible to define, but in very general terms, it suggests an *aesthetic* object of special quality, merit, superior value, and interest. As process, art is the creation of all man-made objects that are examined in a socio-cultural context by anthropologists, writers on culture, artists, and others. Any man-made object is arti-factured, that is, something made with skill (the Latin root *ars*, *artis* means skill or art as process) and is, therefore, similar in concept to *sananguaq*. Aesthetic merit is of secondary importance to overall quality.

Art as process emphasizes quality of skill, whereas art as product emphasizes aesthetic quality. Beneath the differences of product and process lie value judgments. The judgments are based on criteria which conform to characteristics that are expected by, or familiar to each producer and consumer.

For more than one hundred years, all the authors of the vast literature on the Arctic and on Eskimo culture reported on the objects that they had seen, collected, or even catalogued. Only a few, notably Franz Boas and the American ethnologist E. W. Nelson, recognized the aesthetic significance of the objects. Diamond



Above: *Niaqunnuaq Ukuqtunnuaq*, Skidoo Hunting, 1989. Promised gift of George Swinton on loan to the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Below: *John Tiktak*, Mother and Child, 1966. Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, gift of David and Moiya Wright, 1990.

Facing page: *Pootoogook* Jaw, Musicians. Collection of the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology.



Jenness, in later years, could clearly see the brilliant, curvilinear, incised surface decorations of the Old Bering Sea Culture artifacts as artistically related to Polynesian art. But in his 1922 article, he not only considered the artifacts as inferior to Alaskan surface decoration, he also regretted that they were not decorated more elaborately.

Jenness did recognize the similarity of the subject matter in all Eskimo artifacts across the Arctic, despite the great variance in quality of execution. He discussed the execution in terms of conventional Western representational art techniques, such as the rules of perspective and proportion. And it is in this regard that I see Father Projet's attitude as so distinct from the outlook of most earlier authors. In the photograph he obviously sees the little carvings as art—as aesthetic objects that were made to please, and did so.

His little carvings possess the same technical elements that were so often described as rude, crude, and primitive. Yet this type of art does reveal a truth that we can understand based on our feelings about and knowledge of aesthetic principles other than those applying to Western representational art. In the last century, different aesthetic theories have become accepted and cherished by most artists and the public. On the one hand, abstraction came into its own, and on the other hand, the primitive art of non-literate peoples and societies not only became accepted but was also borrowed by us. By becoming part of our visual vocabulary, non-Western art is something that we have learned to understand and appreciate as something far more than ethnic curiosities, souvenir objects, or "whittles"—the term used by some early authors.

Yet herein also lies danger. Qualitative differences do exist for non-Western art, but for the vast majority of the public and for many pseudo-experts such differences are difficult to perceive. As a result, anything made before World





War I has become arbitrarily classified as old, and therefore collectible. Social scientists perceive the objects as providing substantial data or anthropological evidence. I can't help but think of the potential curse of such data, and the associated question of purist, traditionally native correctness, which tends to be as unctuous and as undesirable as political correctness.

It follows from this thinking that the magnificent statuette of seven dancing (or possibly shouting and drunken) sailors in the Flaherty Collection of the Royal Ontario Museum is a true-blue Eskimo ivory carving. This is because it is assumed to be unspoiled by Western influences and made for the carver's own use or amusement, and can be held by the viewer and twisted from side to side because there is neither a fixed perspective nor base. In fact, this little carving was made to be sold to a Western visitor and is untypically Inuit except as a trade item. It is standing on a horizontal base and it is too delicate to be handled. Yet it is a delightful small work of art, totally unique in its form and content, and a perfect example of an Inuit trade item made with Inuit skill and humour.

It is also an extraordinary example of a unique artifact in a society known for its long tradition and collective identity. Since World War II, entirely new principles have emerged in Inuit culture of which individualism, rather than collectivism, is a pronounced feature. This change is quite naturally reflected in art, as it is in most other aspects of material culture. Yet the intellectual cultural patterns have remained largely traditional, which is also reflected in the art.

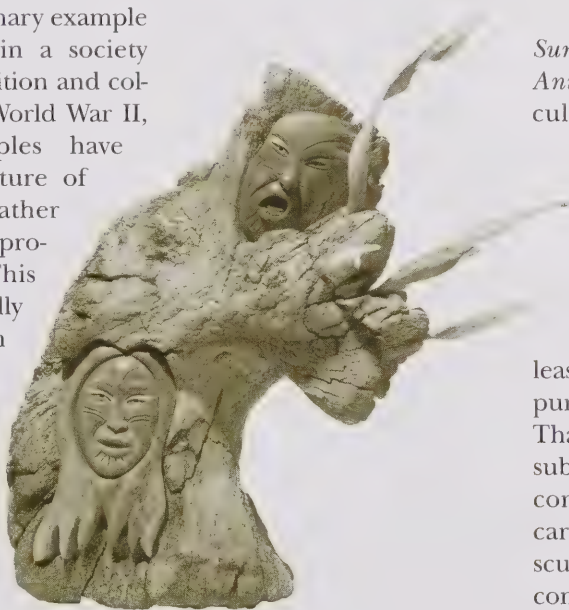
A small, exquisite ivory



Above: *Dancing Sailors*, Flaherty Collection, Royal Ontario Museum.

Below: *Manasie Akpaliapik, Shaman Summoning Taleelayuk to Release Animals*, 1989. Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Facing page: *Johnny Inukpuk, Mother and Child*. Collection of the Toronto Dominion Bank.



carving entitled *Woman*, in the collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, was created around 1951 by an unidentified artist. It is certainly very different from the many slick souvenir carvings so much despised by purists, who consider all contemporary Inuit as specious—"the Inuit of today are no longer *aboriginal* Eskimos."

In fact the piece is truly Inuit, even though it was produced for white collectors.

To criticize Inuit art when it is made for a non-Inuit audience is a most outdated notion. Inuit have always been willing and able to respond to challenges and new circumstances. The success of contemporary Inuit art production, which, like historical production, has been motivated by economic concerns, is mainly due to the outstanding ability of the creators to communicate formally, technically, and expressively, the many aspects of Inuit and Arctic existence. This particular sculpture is distinguished by its great simplicity and purity; it is very sophisticated, yet displays an artless innocence. And the stone is so very beautiful. These are qualities that cannot be measured, but which express the nature of my value judgments.

Manasie Akpaliapik's *Shaman Summoning Taleelayook to Release Animals* is based on spiritual and cultural traditions. Taleelayook is one of the Baffin Island names for the sea goddess Sedna. She lives in the depths of the sea, in total control of all sea mammals that have been held back by her because of broken taboos.

The shaman urges her to release the animals so that hunters may pursue them to prevent starvation. That, more or less, is the sculpture's subject matter, its anthropological content. At the artistic level, it is carved with exceptional skill; the sculpture's baroque qualities stand completely opposite to those of the

TOP PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN BOYLE BOTTOM PHOTOGRAPH BY ERNEST MAYER

early Inukjuak carvings, yet it is totally Inuit in theme, complexity, and technical virtuosity.

Nelson Takkiruaq's *Nuliajuk Holding Face* is equally contemporary in spirit but very different in its powerful expressionist form. Nuliajuk is another central Arctic name for Sedna (there are at least 30 more names used from Greenland to Siberia). The goddess, obviously enraged, dives forward with her huge hands and stumpy fingers (which had been cut off by her father) holding a face, or perhaps a magic mask. This is her way of asserting her authority, or perhaps of calling the shaman to comb her braids to calm her.

Somewhat related to Sedna is *Iqahunappaa*, represented in a carving by Davidialuk. The legend of *Iqahunappaa* involves a hunter, who uses a piece of wood to push the stranded half-fish back into the sea and who is rewarded the next day with astounding gifts: a gramophone, a gun, and a sewing machine. These were highly valued items in the middle of this century. Davidialuk's art—raw, unrestrained, and expressive—is difficult to appreciate, but once understood it becomes irresistibly captivating and exciting.

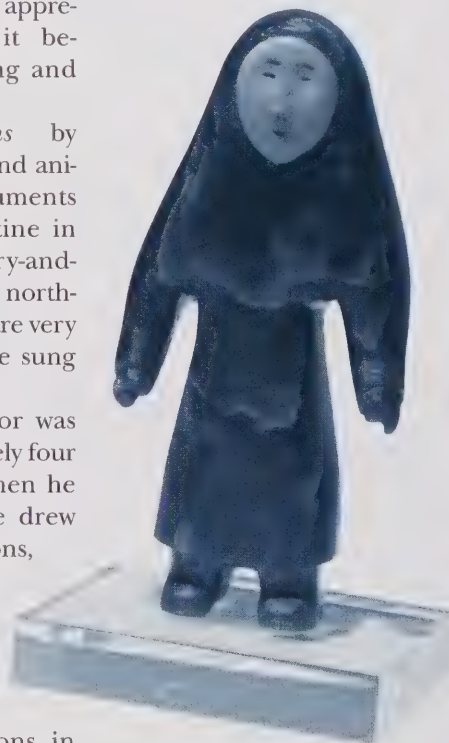
Likewise the *Musicians* by Pootoogook Jaw shows wild and animated figures and instruments carved out of hard serpentine in one piece. Rock and country-and-western groups exist in several northern communities where they are very much appreciated. Songs are sung usually in Inuktitut.

The great artistic innovator was Ashevak, who worked for merely four years, from 1970 to 1974, when he tragically died in a fire. He drew deeply on myths and traditions, and explored the nature of materials, especially whale-bone with its bizarre shapes. Ashevak would combine materials, fantastic storytelling, and traditions in



Above: Nelson Takkiruaq, *Nuliajuk Holding Face*. Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, anonymous donation.

Below: Unknown artist, *Untitled (Woman)*, 1951. Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, gift of Ian Lindsay.



mixed-media techniques. Although his imagery was totally loose, his technique was well-tempered and precise, a perfect union of imagination and craft. His influence is still strongly felt in the Kitikmeot region of the central Arctic (Spence Bay, Gjoa Haven, and Pelly

Bay) where the use of mixed media and inlays has given rise to ingenious sculpture but also to eclectic misuses by less skilful artists. Obviously, the sorcerer's apprentices can't always perform the necessary magic.

Niaqunnuaq Ukuqtunnuaq also comes from Spence Bay. His *Skidoo Hunting* bridges past and present. The carving of a skidoo, since the 1960s the most popular winter vehicle, is posed over a pencilled outline of a bear. The bear was the hunter's great spirit helper and, in that sense, the pencilled outline has ancient symbolic implications of sympathetic magic, much like the Christian traditions of St. Hubert and St. Christopher.

Johnny Inukpuk and Tiktak, like Ashevak, were leaders in their regional styles. Thirty years later, no one as good as these two has emerged. Their styles were opposite. Inukpuk used colossal and profuse forms that are very strong and expressive. Tiktak's sculptures are elegant, gentle, pure and simple, and abstract. Both made carvings on the subject of *Mother and Child*, the most popular theme of Inuit sculpture.

Important as the subject matter of Inuit sculpture may be to anthropologists and others, it is not the whole story. The artistic side of the work reveals and asserts itself. Often words fail in the face of art, although knowing the background of the works and their creators can enhance the viewer's experience. The artists' works, as process and product, must speak to us, not in words but rather in what André Malraux called "voices of silence." ❖



BATS, BATS, AND MORE BATS

Bats and people make an intriguing combination

M. BROCK FENTON

BELOW: THE COMBINATION OF A BAT WITH A SWASTIKA MEANS 10,000 BLESSINGS. IT APPEARS ON A 12-SYMBOL CHINESE IMPERIAL ROBE DATING FROM 1795-1825.



FACING PAGE: THE COMBINATION OF A BAT AND LEOPARD, FOUND ON A MANDARIN SQUARE, WAS A CHINESE MANCHU OFFICIAL INSIGNIA. THE BAT IS A SYMBOL OF GOOD FORTUNE WHILE THE LEOPARD IS A MARTIAL SYMBOL. COLLECTION OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM.

RECENTLY, AS A CHANGE OF PACE FROM RESEARCHING bats in their more common habitats, I decided to look for bats—their images, that is—on Chinese robes in the textiles collection of the Royal Ontario Museum. Chinese robes and other Chinese artifacts from many different periods of history display a treasure trove of bats.

Many readers may already be familiar with the five-bat symbol or “wu fu,” which represents the five blessings: old age, wealth, health, love of virtue, and a peaceful death. “Fu,” the word for bat, sounds the same as the word for blessing. Bats are usually shown upside down, but I had not realized that “dao,” the word meaning “upside down,” is a pun on the word “arrived.” So an upside down bat means that happiness has arrived.

But a bat with a swastika? The swastika is

an ancient, cosmopolitan, and powerful symbol of good in spite of the more recent association of swastikas with Nazis. In Chinese the word for swastika sounds like the word “wan,” which means 10,000. So the bat with the swastika represents 10,000 blessings. While some bats on the robes bore swastikas, others carried blossoms or peaches, other signs of good fortune and happiness.

To the biologist working on bats in Canada or the United States, the Chinese representations of bats are a refreshing change from the more negative images of bats that prevail in our society. For most North Americans, bats are symbols of evil—dirty animals that fly into your hair and that spread rabies. The Chinese view of bats is much more in keeping with what scientists know about them.

For example, everyone has heard about the blindness of bats. However, the Chinese most often show the animals with eyes. Their bats are easy to recognize by the wings, which are portrayed with a diversity of structures and shapes. I don’t know whether this represents an apprecia-

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BROCK FENTON, BRIAN BOYLE

Brock Fenton is a professor in the Department of Biology, York University, and author of several books about bats including his latest, Bats



tion of the diversity of bats or the demands of design.

My research on bats and Chinese culture provoked my curiosity about the notions of bats in other cultures. I have looked in vain for bats in African and Australian rock paintings. This is really a mystery because paintings in southern Africa are frequently found in shelter caves and overhangs, precisely the places where bats often roost. Bats are represented in some early Egyptian rock carvings and it is possible that some of the other images are meant to depict bats, but not in a way that we can recognize.

On the other hand, there are more species of bats in Central and South America than anywhere else in the world and, perhaps reflecting this, pictures of bats abound on the art and utensils of the people of these lands. The Maya presentation of bats may show either wings and/or faces; however, faces are most common. To the uninitiated, the bats' faces are difficult to recognize, but they are very familiar to biologists who study the animals. The bat heads, which are often featured on human bodies, are rendered accurately enough to allow a good guess at the identity of the species.

Zotz is the Maya god of the underworld and is depicted with the head of a vampire bat on a human body. The vampire in Zotz is obvious from the characteristic triangular teeth, but even more so from the heart dripping blood that he often carries. Two other species of bats, leaf-nosed and ghost-faced, are found on Maya artifacts at the Royal Ontario Museum.

The bat effigy on a vessel that was found in a child's tomb shows wings that embrace the vessel and a face dominated by a noseleaf and two ridges. The noseleaves are typical of most of the New World leaf-nosed bats that occur where the Maya lived. Some fruit-eating New World leaf-nosed bats also have prominent white stripes on their faces, which correspond to the ridges on the face of the bat on the vessel. These fruit bats may roost in caves or in foliage and range in size from about 20 to 80 grams.

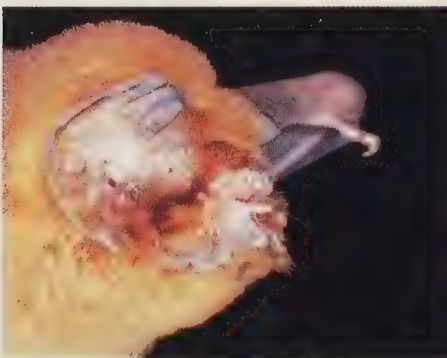
Although quite stylized, the bat face on a

plumbate vessel bears a resemblance to ghost-faced bats, small creatures weighing only about 15 grams, that live in caves and feed on insects. Such bats have very distinctive features, such as their nostrils, which

MY RESEARCH
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BELOW: GHOST-FACED BATS, LIKE MORMOOPS BLAINVILLI FROM JAMAICA, HAVE STRIKING FACES ADORNED WITH LEAF-LIKE STRUCTURES AND NOSTRILS SHAPED LIKE TURRETS.

FACING PAGE: A MAYA PLUMBATE VESSEL ALSO BEARS A STYLIZED PRESENTATION OF A GHOST-FACED BAT. THE TURRET-SHAPED NOSTRILS ARE A CLUE TO THE BAT'S IDENTITY. COLLECTION OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM.



make them easy to identify on artifacts.

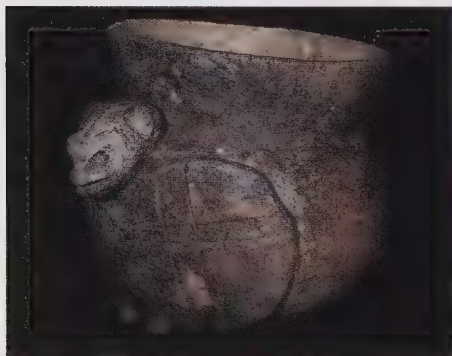
Further south, the Taironan people lived in what is now northeastern Colombia and northwestern Venezuela. They also created images of ghost-faced, noseleaf, and vampire bat heads on human bodies. In Taironan culture, the vampire bat symbolized the fertility of women. The connection of blood and the bite of the vampire was associated with the onset of menstruation. "She has been bitten by the bat," meant that a young woman had reached puberty.

Names given to bats are a clue to how they are perceived by humans. In French, the word for bat is *chauve-souris*, which means bald mouse; in German it is *fledermaus*, flying mouse; and there are Chinese characters that translate as heavenly rat, fairy rat, and flying rat. Not only are bats compared to rodents, they are also described in terms of aberrant birds. When the Chinese refer to a *Yeh yen* or swallow of the night, and the Scots to a gaucky bird, they imply that bats are not quite normal.

This perception of bats recurs in some of the myths about their origins. A common



BELOW: THIS MAYA POT WAS FOUND IN THE GRAVE OF A CHILD AT ALTUN HA, BELIZE. THE BAT, WHICH EMBRACES THE POT, HAS A LEAF-LIKE STRUCTURE ON ITS NOSE AND PROMINENT RIDGES ON ITS FACE THAT CORRESPOND TO THE NOSELEAF AND WHITE FACIAL STRIPES TYPICAL OF SOME LOCAL FRUIT BATS.



ABOVE: THE INTERMEDIATE FRUIT BAT, *ARTIBEUS INTERMEDIUS*, IS WIDESPREAD IN THE YUCATAN PENINSULA. IT IS A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR THE BAT ON THE MAYA POT. FACING PAGE: THERE IS DOUBT WHETHER THE ANIMAL ON THIS MESOAMERICAN POT IS A BAT. ALTHOUGH SOME AFRICAN BATS HAVE CRESTS BETWEEN THEIR EARS, BATS FROM MESOAMERICA DO NOT. COLLECTION OF THE GEORGE R. GARDINER MUSEUM OF CERAMIC ART.

human view of bats is expressed in a story describing a contest or ball game between the mammals and the birds. In some versions of the tale, the bats are characterized as turncoats, always switching to the winning side. When they want to be counted as mammals, the deceitful bats point to their fur and other mammalian characteristics, such as bearing live young and feeding them milk. To be numbered among the birds, the bats simply show their wings. In still other versions, the bats emerge as heroes among the mammals, taking the ball and flying with it to score at the birds' end of the playing field. This story is told by Native Americans including the Cherokee, Seminole, and Cree; by the aboriginal cultures of Australia; and by peoples from southern Nigeria. It was also recounted in ancient Greece and Rome.

The implication that bats are blind also shows up in their names. In Serbo-Croatian *slepi misi* suggests blindness, and the Greek *nycteris* suggests obscurity. The Italian *pipistrello* and the Latin *vespertilio* insinuate that bats emerge in the evening.

An Ojibway legend presents a different story about bats (see *Rotunda*, Volume 14, number 4) that includes several views. According to the legend, one morning the sun became entangled in the branches of a tall tree as it climbed to its place in the sky. The animals searched for the missing sun and finally a small squirrel found it. This

brave animal tried to free the sun from the tree but was forced to the ground three times. The first time he lost the fur on his tail; the second time his fur was burned black and his eyes were ruined; and the third time, as he reached to free the sun, his arms and fingers were stretched and joined by the folds in the skin. Although the squirrel successfully freed the sun on the third attempt, the sun was overwhelmed with guilt over the injuries that the squirrel suffered. As it rose in the sky, the sun looked back and offered to grant

the squirrel its greatest wish. The squirrel wished to fly. So the sun made it possible for the squirrel to fly at night when its sharp ears could hear echoes rebound from objects in its path. In this way the brave squirrel became the little brown bat.

However, interesting as it may be to learn how various cultures regard bats, views that imply that bats are partially


INTERESTING AS IT MAY BE TO LEARN HOW VARIOUS CULTURES REGARD BATS, VIEWS THAT IMPLY THAT BATS ARE PARTIALLY SOMETHING ELSE ARE UNFAIR TO THIS DISTINCTIVE MAMMAL

something else are unfair to this distinctive mammal. I cannot help but wonder what the images of ghost-faced or leaf-nosed bats stood for in Maya or Taironan society. I am amazed by the contrast between Chinese stylized bats and realistic images of the Mesoamericans. And why are bats absent in the cave art of southern Africa, especially when they are bigger than their American counterparts and, in the case of mating male epauletted fruit bats, too showy to overlook?

The study of bats repeatedly raises more questions than it answers, and it is intriguing to find that the research becomes even more complex when people and their views are added. ☘

Brock Fenton will speak about the diversity of bat species and how people relate to bats. Royal Ontario Museum, Sunday 15 November, at 2 pm. For further information or to reserve tickets call (416) 586-5797.





WHAT WERE THE FIRST TRUE TERRESTRIALS?

*Mazon Creek presents a clear picture of the
transition of ancient life from water to land*


DESMOND COLLINS

NOWHERE IN NORTH AMERICA ARE the hopes and fears of humanity illuminated so clearly by the tangible past as in the old Peabody Coal Company strip mine, Pit 11, in northeastern Illinois. Commonwealth Edison has converted Pit 11 into a lake to provide water to cool the two reactors in its Braidwood Nuclear Power Station. By bulldozing a channel through the spoil heaps and then flooding it

from the nearby Kankakee River, the utility company has created a small wilderness in the Illinois countryside, complete with islands covered with naturally seeded shrubs and grasses, and waterfowl nesting on its shores.

The clutches of Canada Goose eggs, set against the nuclear reactor towers looming in the background, provide a compelling symbol of the nature and fragility of life on Earth

*Desmond Collins is a curator in the Department of
Invertebrate Palaeontology, Royal Ontario Museum*



at the present time. But the tens of thousands of fossils in the spoil heaps tell a very different story—the toughness and tenacity of life and its ability to establish itself, and even thrive, in a hostile environment.

My last article about Pit 11 fossils (“The Monsters of Pit Eleven,” *Rotunda*, Fall 1990) covered the animals in the sea, but they are only one part of the whole story. The most common fossils in the Mazon Creek area, including Pit 11, are the remains of plants from the forest that grew along the muddy coastline of this part of Illinois 300 million years ago. Inhabiting the forest were many invertebrate animals, such as spiders, scorpions, centipedes, and primitive insects, and the first vertebrate animals to live on land, the amphibians.

The first tentative, sustained existence of plants and animals on land began about 400 million years ago, in the Silurian Period. It is not known what triggered this development. Plants (algae) had already been living in the world’s oceans for 1500 million years, and animals for 200 million

years. Perhaps the increasing percentage of oxygen in the atmosphere had crossed a critical threshold.

Whatever the reason, small branching plants (psilophytes) began to creep up shorelines onto land. There were obvious advantages to life on land: sunlight for photosynthesis without the loss caused by the filtering effect of water, and a larger living area. However, there were also disadvantages: an environment with greater extremes of heat and cold and with greater radiation from the sun, the threat of dehydration, and the need to support leaves as energy-gathering organs. Early land plants survived by developing vascular tissue. But it took tens of millions of years for plants to acquire the tissues and structures necessary to evolve in the hostile terrestrial environment. Such was their eventual success, however, that by about 350 million years ago, the first forests were growing on land.

Our knowledge of the transition from water to land for animals, particularly invertebrate animals, is

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DESMOND COLLINS

**In 1934 Canadian painter
George Reid recreated a
scene from the Carboniferous
Period showing a coal
forest swamp.**

In 1989, against a backdrop of nuclear reactor towers, Steve Ramsdell collected fossils on an island in Pit 11. Right: Fossilized *Neuropteris*, a seed fern.

much less complete than it is for plants. Moreover, our understanding of the move of animals onto land is strongly biased by our own terrestrial nature. For instance, scorpions have long been thought to be the earliest land animals. Their remains first appear in the fossil record about the same time as the first land plants, often in sediments thought to have been deposited in very shallow water. Since scorpions today are wholly terrestrial, their presence in shallow water at a time when plants were making a transition to land led naturally to the idea that they were similarly in transition.

This conclusion was bolstered by our bias, as land animals, that life on land is "natural" and that animals that look like land animals *are* land animals. In the case of scorpions we could not have been more wrong.

Exceptional preservation in a few early scorpion fossils has revealed the presence of gills,


rather than lungs, demonstrating that these scorpions were aquatic, living wholly in water, unlike any alive today.

Moreover, the fossil record shows that scorpions were aquatic for most of their existence, although all aquatic forms are now extinct. Thus, not only were scorpions not the first land animals, but the scorpions alive today are the terrestrial survivors of what was an essentially aquatic group of animals.

The earliest known terrestrial scorpion, one with lungs, was found in rocks about 350 million years old, suggesting that it may have taken 50 million years for scorpions to adapt to land. This seems to be an inordinately long time. Scorpions, with their thick, external armour that should hinder water loss, strong walking legs, large claws, and a stinger in the tail, would seem to be better equipped than most animals to adapt to life on land. Presumably, the difficulty of the adaptation—the conversion of gills to lungs, for in-



Fossilized bark from a club moss tree *Lepidodendron*.




stance—explains the length of time required. The scorpion's transition from water to land is apparent because of the similarity in appearance of fossil and living specimens. In contrast, we have far greater difficulty recognizing the aquatic ancestors of much more successful land invertebrates such as spiders and insects, presumably because they changed so greatly in appearance throughout their adaptation to land.

Vertebrate animals also made the transition to land not long after plants. A group of fishes closely related to the coelocanth, with sturdy pectoral fins, seems to have been particularly well-disposed to adaptation to land. The four fins became the four legs of amphibians. There may have been pre-adaptation with respect to behaviour as well. Modern-day coelocanth move their pectoral fins alternately in a manner much like the leg motion of four-legged animals.


The evolution of land scorpions and amphibians reveals some of the features necessary for a successful transition to land. First, there must

be food available. Both groups are predators, so their food source, probably primitive insects and spiders, must have already been established. Second, the animals must have some feature or features that helped in the transition, such as the thick armour and strong legs of the scorpions and the fleshy pectoral fins of the amphibian ancestor. Third, there must be pressure, such as severe competition or predation, to provide an incentive for animals to look for survival outside of their original aquatic habitat. This seems to have been the case for the scorpions, because they no longer exist in water. After 100 million years, the transition to land was complete.

Fossils from around Mazon Creek show what the life of that time was like. For more than a hundred years, this area of Illinois has been mined for coal formed from the partially decayed remains of the great forests of the Carboniferous Period, 300 million years ago. Today, mining is done by open-cut methods, although shaft mining was the practice in the




**Fossilized
Annularia
from a
horsetail
tree.**



In 1989 Karlene and Steve Ramsdell travelled by canoe to collecting areas in Pit 11.

Left: The fossilized remains of a winged insect.




early days. From the sedimentary beds associated with the coal seams a rich assemblage of plant fossils has been collected, along with much rarer fossils of animals. The most prolific sites for fossils, both terrestrial and marine, are the Pit 11 spoil heaps.

Plants of the ancient forest fall into four groups known by their common names of club mosses, horsetails, ferns, and seed ferns. Members of all groups except the last are still living today, but as small shrubs rather than as the large trees they were 300 million years ago. Club mosses are exemplified by scale trees such as *Lepidodendron*, trees whose bark has diamond-shaped scars. Horsetails are well represented by *Annularia*. The most recognizable plant fossils are fronds of ferns, such as *Pecopteris*. However, other fern-like forms belong to the now extinct seed ferns, such as *Neuropteris*. Many of these Carboniferous trees characteristically branch into two sub-branches at

each fork. The conifers and cycads of the Mesozoic and the flowering trees of today had yet to evolve 300 million years ago.

Land animals of the region, especially the invertebrates, were superficially not much different from those alive today. Among them are spiders, centipedes, millipedes, and scorpions, the last being particularly rare. Insects include cockroaches and many other winged forms—the first flying animals. The largest insects of all time—huge primitive dragonflies with a wing span up to a metre—lived in these forests. On the whole, the insects of this time seem to have been larger than most of those today, perhaps because they sought spores from the Mazon Creek trees, which were much larger than the pollen of flowering trees today.

Among vertebrate animals, amphibians are well represented. They



**The fossilized
remains of an
exceedingly
rare scorpion.**


were the largest animals living in the Mazon Creek forest, and among the many species some, which had long tails, must have looked more like reptiles than frogs. Others were slim and sinuous, and looked like snakes. Because they laid their eggs in water, the amphibians were still not completely terrestrial.

Their truly terrestrial descendants, the reptiles, had evolved by this time, although none has been recognized so far among the Mazon Creek fossils. Perhaps the Mazon Creek forest was too swampy for them. Nonetheless, reptiles had made that last critical step, the development of the amniotic egg, which made them the first vertebrate animals to live their whole lives on land.

Such thoughts lingered in the back of my mind as I collected Mazon Creek fossils on the islands of the Pit 11 lake, with my friends

Karlene and Steve Ramsdell. On the one hand, because of the accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, the twin towers of the nuclear reactors were an uneasy reminder of the vulnerability of human life. On the other, it was reassuring to see the tangible evidence of the ability of life to survive catastrophes—the ancestors of Mazon Creek life had survived one mass extinction about 365 million years ago, and a few of their descendants would survive the worst mass extinction of all time 70 million years later. And mass extinctions are not necessarily negative events for everyone. The last one, 65 million years ago, eliminated the large reptiles, allowing mammals to evolve rapidly, eventually leading to us.

There are not many places on Earth, particularly pleasant ones like Pit 11, where one can pick up tangible reminders of the first true terrestrials of 300 million years ago, and at the same time contemplate the looming symbols of the possible, although unlikely, extinction of the terrestrials of today. ♡



**The fossilized
remains of
an ancient
cockroach.**

LET'S



Indians and museums

BURY

are working together to eradicate

THE

Indian stereotypes

NOBLE

ROBERT FULFORD

SAVAGE





ONE NIGHT IN THE 1930s A YOUNG SALESMAN FROM Macmillan Publishing was escorting one of the company's star authors, Grey Owl, across the lobby of the King Edward Hotel in Toronto. They were on their way to a banquet in Grey Owl's honour, and the great man was wearing his standard uniform, an elegant fringed-buckskin jacket.

His hair, as usual, was pulled back in tight braids, revealing a noble brow and the stern look of a visionary with a profound belief in his mission.

As they walked past the open door of the beer parlour, several drunks spotted them. "Hey, Chief!" one of them shouted, "Where's your squaw?" Furious, Grey Owl wheeled around, his right hand reaching for the knife at his belt—also a standard part of his public-performance kit. The young man from Macmillan stepped nervously in front of Grey Owl, smiled placatingly at the drunks, and hurried his charge towards the elevator. "You shouldn't let fools like that bother you," he said. "I suppose you're right," Grey Owl replied. "But you see how it is. In this country I'll never be anything but a *god-damned Indian!*"

Thirty years later the young man, John Gray, by then the president of Macmillan, told me the story with a mixture of amusement and wonderment. What he recalled most vividly was Grey Owl's angry racial pride, and how genuine it seemed. John didn't doubt for a second that Grey Owl was an eloquent, sensitive, thoughtful Indian, the most famous Indian alive. But, in fact, Grey Owl was a fraud, which is what makes the encounter with the drunks so rich in irony. The drunks were racists of the usual sort, but they were directing their racism, unknowingly, at another white man. It was as if John Gray and the drunks were the unwitting actors in a play about the mistreatment of Indians, with a non-native voluntarily playing the role of the Indian.

For me, that incident has always summarized perfectly the way whites deal symbolically with natives. The scene had all the necessary elements—anger, bigotry, nobility, and the presence of a man with a powerful image. It had everything but a native.

As a supremely talented fraud, Grey Owl deserves the place of prominence that he is given in *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness*, organized by the Woodland Cultural Centre, which will be displayed in several museums and public galleries across Canada, including the Royal Ontario Museum from 7 November 1992 to 28 February 1993. Shortly after Grey Owl's death in 1938, the whole world learned what a few dozen people, not including his publishers, had known for years, that Grey Owl was an

Facing page: Dr. Haile's "Ole Injun" System Tonic, tin sign, courtesy private collection; a wind-up toy c. 1970, collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre. Below: Three historical romance novels—*Savage Thunder* (1989), *Cherokee Nights* (1991), *Savage Heat* (1989), courtesy private collection.



PHOTOGRAPHY: ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

Robert Fulford is one of Canada's best-known cultural commentators. He teaches journalism ethics at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute

Englishman, Archie Belaney. Belaney had radically rewritten the script of his life and turned himself (with the help of a little make-up) into a Canadian Ojibway. He wrote popular books about native life, like *Pilgrims of the Wild* and *The Men of the Last Frontier*. He appeared in government-sponsored films and went on lecture

tours, preaching respect for nature. When he went home to England to lecture and to sell books, he was cloaked in the magic aura of Indianness that he had acquired in Canada. The young princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret Rose, were his fans, so he went to Buckingham Palace for a command performance. When he was leaving—in a flagrant but quickly forgiven breach of protocol—he clapped King George VI on the shoulder and said, “Goodbye, brother, I’ll be seeing you.” He had the born con man’s ability to pull off an outrageous gesture.

Belaney’s value to our understanding of cultural history lies in his vibrant relationship with white audiences. Having spent his English boyhood dreaming of Indians, he was able to play into white people’s extravagant fantasies of native life. Intuitively, he understood the sort of Indian who would appeal to whites, and he invented his char-

acter to fit the requirements. He created a woodland nobleman who was solemn, dignified, and taciturn. He dressed as whites expected Indians to dress, and uttered the sort of Thoreau-like wisdom, seasoned with mysticism, that whites liked to hear. “I have been asked where I got the power to talk to people,” he said in a 1937 speech to the Empire Club in Toronto. His explanation was modest, rather like that of a TV evangelist who gives Jesus all the credit for his own eloquence. “It is not me at all. I have behind me that immense north country. I have the power of it standing behind me, greater than you or I. I am only the screen for the picture I wish to show. I am the mouthpiece.”

His career illustrated the truth that those who present themselves as untutored, uncomplicated, and “natural”—from the poet who claims to know nothing of poetry to the politician who eschews book-learning and insists that he is just an ordinary guy—usually turn out to be purveyors of clichés and stereotypes. This is not to suggest that stereotypes are innately harmful, or fraudulent. Most human wisdom begins with the creation of categories (a nicer word for stereotypes). We spend our lives mentally organizing the objects and people around us into categories. Modern botany, for example, began in the eighteenth century with Carolus Linnaeus carefully sorting plants into genera, classes, and orders. Humans are pattern-making animals. None of us could get through the day without frequent reference to our internal systems of classification.

But we distort this healthy and necessary process when we rely not on experience or careful study but on manufactured fantasies, those hallucinations of mass culture that have a nasty habit of displacing intelligence. “Indianness,” in its many forms is one

“Indianness,” in its many forms, is a fantasy that transforms natives into cardboard cut-outs thereby screening the actual human beings and limiting the perception and imagination of whites



An early twentieth-century music sheet of the *Indian Huntress Quadrilles*, collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre.

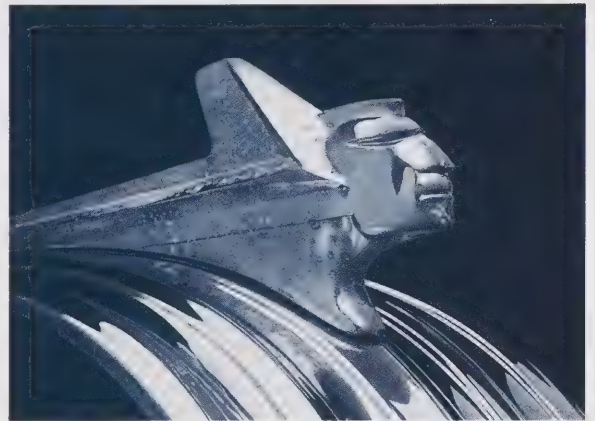
such fantasy. It transforms natives into cardboard cut-outs. It screens the actual human beings, and limits the imagination and perception of whites.

It can be more devastating, however, to natives, who grow up with mass culture in the same way other North Americans do, automatically absorbing its imagery. Deborah Doxtator, the curator of *Fluffs and Feathers*, recalls that, "for the longest time I didn't know what to say when someone asked if I was 'really Indian'." What, after all, is a real Indian? From movies, books, cartoons, and school film strips she had learned that "real Indians" were mysterious romantic figures, yet with some flaws—"such as ruthlessness, a lack of self-control, and technological backwardness." People were conditioned to believe that "real Indianness," as she says, "had something to do with not talking very much, never smiling, wearing fringed clothing, being mystical, being poor, and riding horses."

Living beneath this barrage of images, natives can easily grow up alienated, not only from the larger society but also from the people, including fellow natives, who are close to them. Developing a sense of identity, never an easy matter, becomes even more difficult when your ethnic connections are defined, almost always wrongly or inadequately, by the larger culture—and when the larger culture is composed mainly of those outside your own group. Blacks, Jews, and many other minorities have known this problem in various forms, but it comes to natives with something else attached, something both baffling and ominous—an implication that whatever is genuinely native is part of the past.

For as long as anyone can remember, the larger culture of North America has discussed native culture in the past tense. Native culture is assumed to be something that once was, is no longer, and therefore can best be commemorated in museum displays depicting past ways of life. This assumption can be held maliciously (by those who wish to see natives disappear or be assimilated), but it can also be held by those whose motives are generous; as Doxtator point out, anthropologists and ethnographers usually take it for granted that they are dealing with the end of a civilization, no matter how much they may respect it.

The great ethnographer Marius Barbeau, who collected and described native art and artifacts (including many of the ROM's), wrote in 1923: "It is clear that the Indian with his inability to preserve his own culture...is bound to disappear as a race." When Barbeau set those words down, that



Pontiac hood ornament (1947), private collection.

Rock Hudson starred in *Taza, Son of Cochise*, collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre.



belief had already been part of popular culture for close to a century. It was given a terse summary in the title of James Fenimore Cooper's 1826 best-seller, *The Last of the Mohicans*. Cooper understood the sentimental pleasure to be found in reading about people who may be extremely admirable but are on the point of leaving

the planet forever and therefore cannot possibly threaten anyone. That nostalgic theme was picked up by many other novelists, then by filmmakers, then by TV producers. There are now few living humans who have not absorbed it through one means of communication or another. Those who know that their race rules the world can enjoy mourning those races that are slipping into oblivion—and can even admire themselves for mourning.

All this is the subtext to *Fluffs and Feathers*. In a sense, the exhibition expresses

one part of the native agenda for museums, an attempt to reorganize the way our great public institutions deal with aboriginals. For many years natives have argued that museums use native cultures carelessly, even to the point of exhibiting the bones of their ancestors. "My Grandfather is not an Artifact" was the theme of a recent conference in Hull on archaeology and native issues.

Tom V. Hill, director of the museum of the Woodland Cultural Centre, was a co-chair of a task force, "Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples," sponsored by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association. The task force came about after the intense controversy over *The Spirit Sings*, the 1988 exhibition of native art and artifacts put together by the Glenbow Museum for the Calgary Olympics. Three points in the task-force report emerged as central to the native agenda for public institutions: repatriation of some objects to institutions run by natives; improved access to collections of native artifacts by natives; and greater involvement by native people in the use of native materials.

The exhibition and task force are part of a long-range effort to persuade the greater North American public to reconsider its view of native life as something purely historic. As Trudy Nicks of the ROM's Department of Ethnology and the other co-chair of the task force says, "It brings across the idea that native people aren't just figures in history; they're living people, right here, and if we see them only through these stereotypes, we're missing a lot."

Our tendency to place native culture exclusively in the past arises from an idea that is at least four hundred years old—the idea of prehistoric native purity. Europeans have understood, at least



Geronimo: A Man Among Men..., movie poster (c. 1962), collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre.

Reproduction of a cast-iron bank (1982) from the Chicago World's Fair, collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre.



since the Renaissance, that their own society and the societies they created in the Americas and elsewhere, are constantly changing. The changes may be good or bad, and may or may not be the result of contact with other cultures; but they do not make European civilizations any less European. Yet we imagine that

aboriginal cultures, in North America or anywhere else, are not only affected by contact with Europeans but are ruined by it. A glance at a few catalogues will show that some of the most admirable products of aboriginal cultures (Haida carving, Micmac beadwork, Inuit sculpture) followed contact with Europeans. Yet we persist in the idea of purity, an idea that is necessarily pessimistic about the future of native life. If natives also accept and believe, as given, the traditional views of the media and the museums, then they are finished before they start.

Doxtator has ingeniously constructed a native analysis of a white culture's use of native life in *Fluffs and Feathers*, thereby creating a neat reversal of the traditional ethnographic process. Her goal is to subvert those traditional views by displaying the copious absurdities of "Indianness" as contrived by North American mass culture. Materials exhibited run

from posters for Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows in the 1880s, advertising "two hundred Indians of various tribes" enacting an attack on a train of white settlers, to Pontiac hood ornaments, wooden cigar-store Indians, and contemporary airport souvenirs executed in vaguely native designs. Doxtator also presents a fairly lengthy look at Hollywood Indians, and notes how often natives are depicted by non-natives. Elvis Presley, Mary Pickford, and Yul Brynner all played natives; Rock Hudson starred in *Taza, Son of Cochise*, and Jeff Chandler played Cochise himself in *Broken Arrow*, the 1950 film in which Hollywood inaugurated a new spirit of kindness towards natives but did not carry tolerance to the extent of actually giving them starring roles.

"Rarely," Doxtator wrote in the book accompanying *Fluffs and Feathers*, "have Indians been treated by Canadian society as equals." The symbolism of popular culture has helped to create the atmosphere that makes racism possible. There is a large tragedy in this subject, the tragedy of blindness, incomprehension, and exclusion—and in *Fluffs and Feathers* the tragedy never quite disappears. But people who visit the exhibition, non-natives and natives, will also see the comedy in this bizarre assemblage of comic books and beer labels, biscuit tins and city crests. Doxtator has played satirically with her material, often emphasizing what is funniest about it. It's her way, an ancient and honourable way, of leading us gently towards the truth. ♡

Doxtator has ingeniously constructed a native analysis of a white culture's use of native life, thereby creating a neat reversal of the traditional ethnographic process. Her goal is to subvert those traditional views by displaying the copious absurdities of "Indianness" as contrived by North American mass culture

An illuminated sign for Iroquois Beer-Ale, collection of the Woodland Cultural Centre.



❖ LETTERS/FURTHER READING ❖

Caring for Bluebirds

I read with interest the article *Bluebirds, Blowflies, and Parasitic Wasps* by Chris Darling and Julie Thomson-Delaney in the summer 1992 issue of *Rotunda* (Volume 25, number 1). In the article they recommend that bluebird boxes be lined with "hardware cloth." We have never heard this term and asked a friend who is keenly interested in saving the bluebirds and has made many boxes for them. Neither he nor other friends with similar interests had ever heard of hardware cloth.

We are also interested in the question of whether or not to clean out the boxes each spring. Our impression up to now has been that they should be cleaned out or the bluebirds won't come back to them, but the article advises against this. We would be interested in further comments on this point.

GENEVIEVE C. HOLDEN
SHANTY BAY, ONTARIO

The Authors Reply

The term "hardware cloth" refers to masonry wire, which is also known as stucco wire. It is a heavy, pliable wire or screen, which is available in a number of different size gauges. The wire we used to construct the platforms for the nest boxes was made up of 1/2-inch squares. This wire can be found in most hardware and lumber stores where it is often sold in four-foot widths.

To answer your question about cleaning nest boxes each spring, by all means continue this practice. Our research has indicated that cleaning out the nest boxes in the fall, not the spring, may adversely affect *Nasonia* (wasp) populations. In fact, depending on the weather conditions, it is possible that overwinter-

ing wasp larvae will have emerged as adults before you conduct your spring clean-up. Just to be on the safe side, sweep the old nesting material onto the ground. This will allow any remaining wasps to complete their development and begin the cycle anew.

Incidentally, we have found bluebirds nesting in boxes that were not previously cleaned out. Nevertheless, we do recommend the cleaning of used nest boxes because ectoparasites, such as bird mites, may overwinter in old nests. But that, as they say, is another story.

For more information about bluebirds and how to encourage their proliferation we suggest the following book:

Zelaney, L., *The Bluebird: How You Can Help Its Fight for Survival* (1976), Indiana University Press (Bloomington).

•*Rotunda welcomes letters from its readers. Please include your address and phone number. Send letters to Rotunda, Publications and Print Services, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6.*

FURTHER READING

•Bats, Bats, and More Bats

The best book on the subject of bats and people is:

Tupinier, Denise, *La chauve-souris et l'homme*, 1989, Editions L'Harmattan (Paris).

Other books include:

Fenton, M. B., *Bats*, to appear fall 1992, Facts on File Inc., (New York).

Fenton, M. B., *Just Bats*, 1983, University of Toronto Press (Toronto).

Hill, J. E., and J. D. Smith, *Bats: A Natural History*, 1985, British Museum (Natural History) (London).

Williams, C. A. S., *Outlines of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives*, 1976, Dover Publications (New York).

SMOKER'S COCONUT FOUND



In the spring 1992 issue of *Rotunda*, Volume 24, number 4, Ed Keall, a curator in the Museum's West Asian Department, described his theory on the identity of grenade-shaped objects in his article *Smoking a Coconut*. He suggested that they were ceramic versions of coconuts once used as the water-containers for hubble-bubble pipes.

After the publication of the article, David Sage, a ROM Member, brought to the West Asian Department for identification an actual coconut-based water pipe. The pipe dates from mid-nineteenth-century India. While Keall's theory is not advanced by the discovery of the coconut-based water pipe, the object does reinforce the notion that a coconut makes an ideal pipe base.



A bracket clock attributed to André-Charles Boulle, in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, has been restored to its original splendour.

Erasing the Ravages of Time

IN DECEMBER 1987, A BRACKET clock attributed to André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732) and owned by the Royal Ontario Museum, arrived in the Furniture and Wooden Objects Lab of the Canadian Conservation Institute. Boulle was the craftsman who perfected the technique of brass-and-tortoiseshell inlay.

The clock, now restored to its former glory, is a truly magnificent object. Its brown-oak case is crowned by a pediment on which an ormolu figure sits. Completely symmetrical inlay designs depict scrollwork, foliage, birds, and childlike faces, and Baroque ormolu mounts cover much of the clock surface. The use of windows, characteristic of the Baroque, allows better viewing of the highly decorative back panel. Inscribed on the back of the clock mechanism are the words "De'y

Paris." Roman numerals on individual enamelled plates are mounted on the engraved brass clock face. A sun-god motif, a symbol used by Louis XIV, decorates the pendulum.

Its present splendour contrasts sharply with the ravaged artifact received by the CCI. When the clock arrived much of the inlay was loose, detached, or missing. Accompanying the case were envelopes containing numerous small sections of inlay, and boxes containing smaller structural elements, brass trimmings, and small ormolu pieces. There had originally been a bracket on which the clock rested but the wooden framework was missing; all that was left was its heavy ormolu mounts.

Closer inspection of the inlay confirmed that some areas had undergone previous restoration. This was

clear from the colour of the brass, the absence of engraving on some brass pieces, and the difference in colour and markings of the tortoiseshell. A thick layer of varnish slightly obscured the decorative inlay on the back panel, which had undergone the most extensive restoration.

The clock was like a three-layered assemblage—the wooden case, the tortoiseshell-and-brass inlay, and the ormolu mounts. Conservation problems had to be approached one step at a time. The first step was to piece together all the structural and decorative elements. Stabilizing the case required re-gluing loose joints and surface cleaning. The next step was to find out if all the necessary inlay was in place or available. Most Boulle work is symmetrical, and fortunately there was sufficient intact inlay to provide the information

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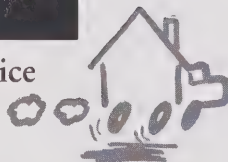
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CONSERVATION NOTES CONTINUED

necessary to repair the pattern.

In order to reproduce missing inlay, real or synthetic tortoiseshell had to be used. After research on the two materials, genuine tortoiseshell was chosen. A shell was obtained from the Herpetology Division of the Canadian Museum of Nature, with the understanding that leftover material and the vertebrae would be returned. The use of synthetic tortoiseshell would have had several drawbacks. It requires the use of an irreversible adhesive; it is difficult to colour-match; and it can not be reduced to a specific thickness.

Before an inlay design could be cut, the raw tortoiseshell had to be prepared. After the carapace had been soaked in hot water, the shell plates were removed with a hammer and a large spatula. Then the plates were softened in boiled water and pressed flat to dry for at least 12 hours. To match the thickness of the original tortoiseshell inlay, the plates were shaved with glass and metal scrapers, and then smoothed with sandpaper.

Boulle's technique was followed when replacing the inlay. First the remaining original designs on the clock were traced onto mylar; these tracings acted as patterns to indicate the missing sections of inlay. Next the original inlay sections were meticulously removed, cleaned, and stuck to tracing paper with the mylar tracing over top. A sheet of prepared tortoiseshell was fastened to the underside of the paper, and then a sheet of brass was fastened to the underside of the tortoiseshell. Only the missing brass and tortoiseshell were cut out, with the use of a fret saw and fine jeweller's saw blades. Replicated brass and tortoiseshell sections could be recognized by their colour and lack of engraving.

The final consideration was how to attach the inlay to the case. Fluctuating environmental conditions have created problems for Boulle pieces in North American collections. Inlays tend to become

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CONSERVATION NOTES CONTINUED

partially or completely detached. During restoration of Boulle clocks epoxies are often used, but they were not considered suitable for this project because they are irreversible.

In Boulle's day additives such as garlic juice or urine were mixed with an animal glue to increase its elasticity and improve its bond to metals. Animal and fish glues were tested under widely varying conditions of relative humidity, with glycerine replacing the traditional plasticizers. These tests indicated that sturgeon glue with five per cent glycerine provided a strong, flexible bond.

Reattaching the completed brass-and-tortoiseshell designs to the case, especially to the curved elements, was a constant challenge. A large variety of wooden clamping blocks was designed to apply pressure to the flat surfaces. On the curved surfaces, a technique used for marquetry, involving a vacuum pump attached to a plastic bag, was employed.

The use of a reversible glue meant that it could be reactivated with heat. It could then be manipulated by hand around the inlay to ensure a strong bond between the design and the wood substrate. Heat from a photography lamp was sufficient to soften the glue.

Since the clock is too unstable to support its own weight, a safe means of display was devised by bolting a metal shelf to the display wall above the bracket. The clock rests on this shelf and appears to be freestanding on the bracket.

Treatment of this complex artifact presented the rare opportunity of in-depth study of Boulle work. Many hours of research preceded the conservation. The information gathered will be of considerable value to conservators working on similar artifacts.

LAURA NAGORA

Laura Nagora is assistant conservator at the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa

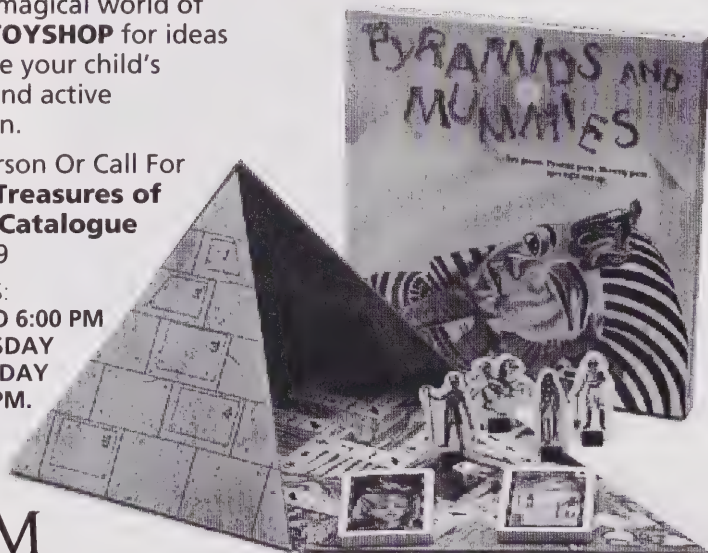
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IN PUBLISHING CIRCLES THEY'RE called megaprojects: mammoth, multi-volumed works of reference or scholarship that suck up enormous resources of energy and money and seem to go on for decades. Two examples are the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* and the *Collected Works of Erasmus*, both published by the University of Toronto Press.

Even in these difficult times for publishing, new megaprojects are getting started. For me the most intrinsically fascinating of all such schemes now underway is **The Papers of Thomas A. Edison**, which will run to 20 volumes in all. The first one, documenting the adolescent Edison, appeared in 1989, and I've been waiting eagerly for the next, which would reveal him in his late twenties, when he was entering his most productive period as an inventor and very pragmatic sort of scientist. It's now materialized from Johns Hopkins University Press (US \$75, and worth every penny) with the subtitle **From Workshop to Laboratory June 1873-March 1876**.

Edison was born in Ohio to Canadian parents who had fled across Lake Erie after the rebellion of 1837. As a lad he worked on a railway and became a master telegrapher, partly (if legend is to be believed) because the deafness from which he suffered let him develop his touch on the brass key without being too distracted by its racket. His early inventions all proceeded from that technology. His first big strike was in answer to a request by Wall Street stockbrokers. They received price quotations from the exchange floor by wire, the signals arriving in their offices in Morse

code, which they couldn't read. They offered a huge cash incentive to someone who could devise a machine that would instantaneously translate the Morse into English and print it out on a tape.

When we meet up with Edison again in this new volume of letters, articles, lab notes, sketches, and the like, he is in his late 20s, just back from England where he tried to sell British postal authorities on his automatic telegraph (they didn't bite). Some people were already beginning to call him a genius. "He was a promising young man with more backers than notable inventive accomplishments." We see him plunge into work on such projects as a railway signal device, a primitive copying process, an "inductorium" for administering electrical shocks as medical treatment, and a battery-operated electric pen.

We observe him expanding his mental horizons or trying to. He teaches himself chemistry in order to tackle some problems concerning different emulsions on the paper fed into his stock-tape printer, and he is always anxiously looking for "new forces" that might take him in fresh, and highly exploitable, directions. Inevitably, some of his inventions turn out to be useful in ways he could not imagine at the time. Using compressed carbon in glass tubes, he builds a rheostat (for varying electric current) of such sensitivity that it was worthless for his immediate purpose but would later help to perfect Alexander Graham Bell's telephone.

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BOOKS CONTINUED

quadraplex telegraph (capable of sending two messages in one direction and two in the other at the same time). His announcement of the quadraplex in 1873 was the signal for a year-long attack by jealous rivals in the professional press (to which Edison himself would contribute a great deal, in addition to the writing he did to popularize his work). Such was the nature of invention itself (and Edison's most interesting creation was the profession of inventing) that one was forever being attacked and sued or else attacking and suing others.

The editors of this volume—Robert A. Rosenberg, Paul B. Israel, Keith A. Nier, and Melodie Andrews—were confronted with patent files and court records, "each with its own documentary legacy." So rich is the total archive of material that they have used only about 15 per cent of the documents available for the years in question, even though the time-span is a particularly crucial one in the story of Edison's long life and fecund imagination.

For several years prior to this, Edison enjoyed a lucrative relationship with Western Union, but in 1875 he threw in his lot with the Atlantic & Pacific Telegraph Company, the creation of Jay Gould, the notorious Wall Street pirate whose attempt to corner the gold market had led to the nationwide financial panic of 1869. A later panic (as recessions were then called), in 1873, had forced Edison to sell his house and move his family into an apartment. But then Edison would often seem to have monetary problems, regardless of the economic cycle. He was a skilled promoter, but one can't escape the conclusion that he was a poor businessman, though an incessant one. He generally liked to put his inventions into production himself, and during the period discussed in this volume, he opened a retail shop in New York City to sell products to the public.

Yet by this time he was also growing impatient with such details himself, and he delegated more

Explorer has consistently outperformed all other 4x4's on the most demanding surface of all. Paper.

Best new Sport Utility two years running.

Four Wheeler Magazine
By Ken Von Helmolt

As the Bronco II is phased out, Ford will phase in the Explorer series. The Explorer line will include two- and four-door models.

On the highway, the Explorer's lively soft suspension provided cosmopolitan ride. Unfortunately, high speeds.

The Explorer's classic good looks and exceptional comfort have made it the smash it is.

Automobile Magazine
By JEAN LINDAMOOD

We loved the Ford Explorer from the moment we piled into it. We were on the big island of Hawaii at the end of the 1990's.

Seasons test, taking delivery in late spring. We then proceeded to drive Explorer farther than any other Ford.

Explorer... one of the great Sport Utility buys of the 1990's.

Four Wheeler Magazine
By Ken Von Helmolt

The Explorer is a completely new vehicle based on some of Ford's tried-and-true truck chassis and

corners, the ride turned "jittery and underdamped when pushed." Another tester felt that "the Ford" had understeer. On the way, play "the

Ford Explorer is a superb family vehicle

By Cam McRae
TORONTO STAR

Ford products may well be the catalyst required to turn the North American

In contrast, the Explorer is a very handsome vehicle in keeping with the Ford truck tradition of a bold, chunky form.

The more conservative appearing four-door is a superb family vehicle.

Part of the impressive styling trompe the Explorer.

The Explorer was a pleasure to drive and the most versatile and useful wagon (truck?, car? limo?) this reporter has driven. - Road & Track

BY PETER EGAN

It went through deep snow and spring mud, out to dinner, back and forth to work, off to the airport to pick up arriving guests and their luggage, from Wisconsin to the Appalachians.

Besides being functionally well-rounded, the Explorer has just enough

All of its competitors concede that the Explorer is now the gold standard for the category.

Adweek
By David Kiley

In the spring of 1988, when Roger Simpson took over as manager of designers, he

Even that might be an understatement. Simpson, and the team of designers, he

the Ford Explorer, was finally unveiled last year and the new



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BOOKS CONTINUED

and more authority for manufacturing and business to his assistants and colleagues. By the end of the present instalment, he has given up trying to juggle the two sorts of activity and has moved into his soon-to-be-famous laboratory at Menlo Park, New Jersey. This he set up as a kind of invention factory, totally devoted to what he did best. Reading *From Workshop to Laboratory* reinforces the impression of the preceding volume in the series: that in terms of his personality, Edison was extraordinary mainly in the sense of being ordinary to the greatest possible extreme. In 1874 we find him sending his father a chatty little note full of domestic news, financial matters, and problems with lab assistants. Then in a postscript, as though he had forgotten to mention it in the body of text, he adds: "I have made a new discovery in electricity which I have been exhibiting to the American Academy of Sciences in session at the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia. They all agreed that it was [an] original and important discovery." Another time, a colleague's attack causes him to scribble a prose poem in one of his notebooks, full of references to Napoleon and a dark allusion to the "yellow oasis in hell." What an odd and fascinating fellow he was.

SOME OTHER NEW BOOKS OF POTENTIAL interest to *Rotunda* readers:

- **Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century** by Norman F. Cantor (Macmillan of Canada, \$37.95) has nothing to do with Thomas Edison's kind of inventing and is vastly more interesting than its title. Fascinating, in fact. Cantor, a native Winnipegger, argues that whereas "half of our present knowledge of the classical and other ancient worlds was a legacy of the nineteenth century," the Middle Ages are overwhelmingly the result of a post-Victorian academic vogue on both sides of the Atlantic.

Since 1900, he shows, university

posts in the field have increased a thousandfold. This is due partly to the sheer staggering size of the written record, a record that has survived comparatively intact because it was mostly on parchment rather than on mere paper and because "social disorder [great though it was at times, has] taken a less heavy toll on medieval manuscripts" than on earlier ones. He discusses 20 of the most influential scholars and teachers, most of whom he has known personally and recalls pointedly, with revealing and derisive anecdotes where applicable. Intellectual history is rarely this readable.

- There is a famous book of the 1930s called *Rats, Lice and History*. Its author, Hans Zinsser, showed with quite ingenuous conviction how the creatures of his title have been major forces in shaping world events (not just the Plague). Thus began a certain kind of audacious and imaginative social history, using such unlikely avenues to reassess big or basic historical concepts. The classicist and biographer Jack Lindsay, for example, once published a wonderful history of explosions. Stephen J. Pyne's book **Burning Bush: A Fire History of Australia** (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, \$19.95 paperback) is similar. Pyne rewrites, or at least reorders, antipodean history by, for instance, contrasting the way aborigines have seen fire (as a tool for farming) with the way British settlers viewed it (as an enemy to be feared or a weapon to be wielded).

- The nasty international confrontation over East Coast cod stocks that threatened to erupt into naval warfare earlier this year imparts a new timeliness to **Fishes of the Sea: The North Atlantic and Mediterranean** by John and Gillian Lythgoe (MIT Press, US \$35). This is a revised and expanded version of a fish-watchers' guide first published 20 years ago, and it is a testament to the advances made in underwater photography. The North American part of the book covers the whole area from Chesapeake Bay up to the northern tip of Newfoundland. For most species there is both an accurately

coloured photograph and at least one line drawing, intended as an aid in identifying the fish in their habitat, along with all pertinent scientific and non-scientific information. A well-thought-out production, not ungainly as photographic nature books go.

• **Medieval Maps** by P. D. A. Harvey (University of Toronto Press, \$40) is so interesting because medieval maps were relatively few and are scarcely recognizable as what we would think of as maps at all. They weren't usually works of reference, but either rough plans or fanciful flat pictures of what certain terrain might look like from high above, with perspective and relationships distorted beyond practical use. To know that art and theology had more influence on the subject than science is to be reminded of something important about medieval Europe. As for the objects themselves, which are often heavy with text in red script, they are strangely compelling, combining some of the attraction of illuminated manuscripts with part of the allure of, say, the best Chinese scroll painting.

• **Seeing the Forest among the Trees** by Herb Hammond (Polestar/Rain-coast, \$46.95 paperback) is a book you may already have heard about. It's controversial. The author is a professional forester and forestry professor in British Columbia where his name has almost become a rallying cry for those fighting the logging industry on environmental grounds. Unlike so many of the industry's critics, Hammond knows its intricacies and also has practical proposals and solutions to offer, including the spread of community forestry boards. These, to his way of thinking, help ensure holistic forest use, the term he employs for the habit of considering each patch of forest as indivisible from forests in general. He advocates a system in which logging roads are fewer, technology is more basic, clear-cutting is banned, and humans are generally relegated to a support role, harvesting without destroying.

• **To Please the Caribou** (ROM, \$65;

\$35 paperback) by Dorothy K. Burnham, is no doubt the final and definitive word on a small but interesting topic. The subject is the caribou-skin hunting coats made and worn by (as the subtitle says) "the Naskapi, Montagnais, and Cree Hunters of the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula." Most examples of this art form—usually with complex traditional motifs painted on the bleached-white hides—are in museums. The ROM owns 14, though most examples are in the United States and Europe, where they are

for the most part out of reach of natives as well as whites. The garments represent a kind of craft that will help dispel some notions many people have held about nomadic culture. The underlying question Ms Burnham addresses is whether or not the coats show evidence of European influence. Specialists will wish to know. The rest of us will marvel at the patterns and the methods.

DOUGLAS FETHERLING

Douglas Fetherling is literary editor of the Kingston Whig-Standard

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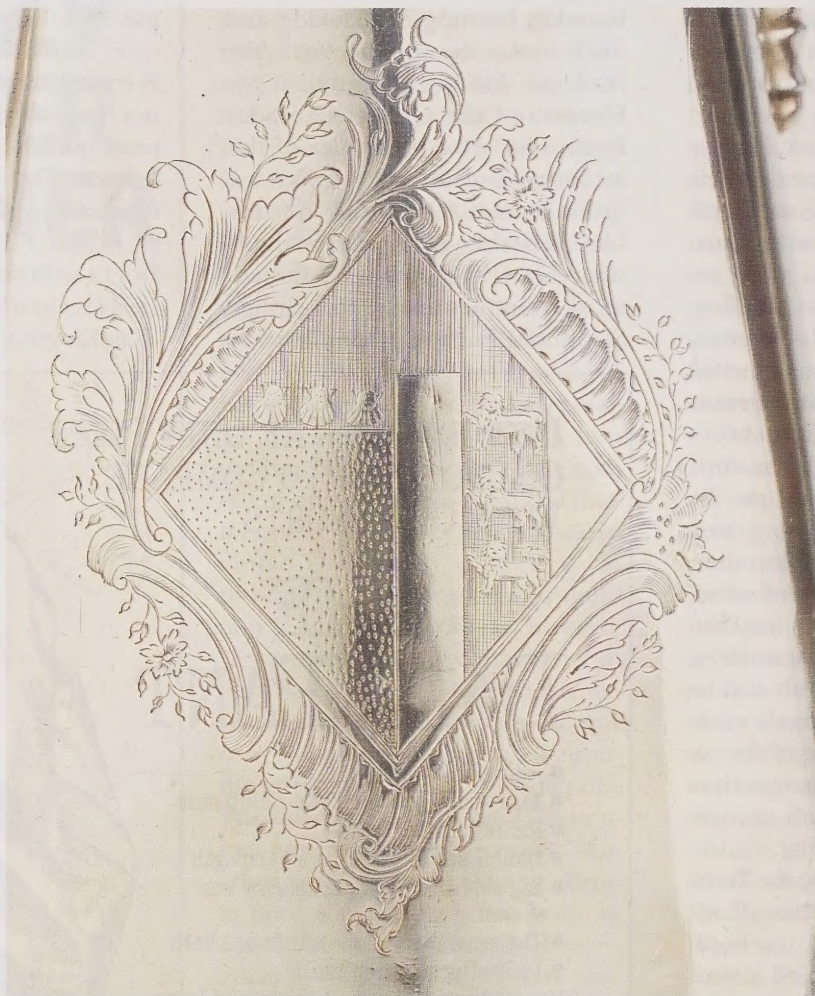
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Mr. Kenneth L. Ashurst, O.B.E., has researched this crest and others on silver, ceramic, and glass objects in the Samuel European Galleries. He has concluded that the crest belonged to a widow who had been married to a member of the Graham family of Scotland. She was probably born a Taylor of Eaton, Bedfordshire.

Today silver collectors are placing more value on pieces bearing the arms of their original owners. The coffee pot is one of 23 pieces of British silver generously donated to the Museum in 1983 by Henry Birks & Sons.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN BOYLE

PETER KAEELGREN, *associate curator, European Department,*
Royal Ontario Museum




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